

THE LIFE INSURANCE CURE.

A Dying Bachelor Who Became Interested in a Plan for a Novel Funeral.

"I don't know that life insurance is a cure for disease," said the retired life insurance solicitor, "but I know of an instance which makes it look that way. In the town where I first began business was a bachelor of about 50 years, who was quite alone in the world, and had some years before taken out a five-thousand-dollar policy on himself for the benefit of a maiden sister, who had died a year before the events of this story. He kept his policy going, however, because it was a good way to save money, and one day he was taken down with some kind of fever. He grew worse day after day, until one day the doctor told him that he would in all likelihood be dead within the next twenty-four hours. This suggested his life insurance money, all he had to leave, and he immediately began to talk with the doctor on the subject of a proper disposal of it. He concluded after some thought that the best thing to do with it was to blow it in on a tremendous big funeral for himself, including a banquet for all the people he knew. This was an entirely new idea for a funeral, and when the doctor left him that night to the care of his nurse his mind was entirely occupied with his funeral. He talked to the nurse about it and when the nurse made him stop he lay and thought about it. In fact, he became so much interested in the details of his funeral that he quite forgot about having to die to make it possible. In the morning when the doctor came he found his patient in a wild perspiration and his pulse beating in much better fashion than it had been doing for some days. He also found the general condition of the patient much improved. He was greatly astonished, and at once began to ask questions. The patient told him with eager interest of a lot of new things he had thought of for the funeral and some that bothered him a good deal and said he had been thinking of it all night. Then the doctor laughed and told him he guessed the funeral would have to be postponed, for he wasn't going to die, just then anyhow. Nor did he, and he isn't dead yet, but he is married and has his policy paid up for his wife's benefit."

AN ART TREASURE

Found in the House of a Man Forced to Sell His Effects.

New York Correspondence of the Chicago Times-Herald: Through the financial misfortunes of an old New Yorker a famous art treasure, Gerome's "Consummatum Est," depicting the crucifixion of Christ on Mount Calvary, has been discovered in this city. Art connoisseurs say it is worth from \$25,000 to \$30,000. At any rate it means that its owner, whose name is not divulged, instead of spending the coming Christmas in penury, as he had anticipated, is at least sure of enough to satisfy his present wants. It was when this old New Yorker's affairs had reached such a stage that something had to be done, and that right quickly, that he sent for Clarence M. Darling of 124 West Twenty-sixth street. Mr. Darling found him disconsolate in his home. He related his troubles and said that all he saw in store was to sell his furniture, tapestries and bronzes, the remnant of a once magnificent collection. Mr. Darling glanced around the rooms and saw at once that not much could be realized, but as he was about to take his leave his eye suddenly caught a glimpse of what appeared to be a dust-covered painting carelessly resting on the top of a wardrobe in a corner of the room. "What's that up there?" he asked, climbing on a chair and taking the painting down. The painting, while dust covered and dim, upon inspection proved to be in good condition and none the worse for its hard usage. Mr. Darling had not examined the canvas long when he uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and declared that if its genuineness could be authentically established it was easily to be valued at not less than \$25,000 to \$30,000. Mr. Darling recognized in one corner of the canvas the name of J. L. Gerome, and subject as no other than the master's "Consummatum Est," "Shadow of the Cross," or crucifixion of Christ on Mount Calvary. As to the genuineness of the painting, its owner recalled the fact that in his possession was an autograph letter from Gerome, describing the painting and the circumstances under which it was painted.

"Green Grows the Rushes, Oh."

When the Americans went to war with Mexico a melody, every verse of which ended with "Green grows the rushes, oh," was very popular. It pleased almost everybody's fancy and was sung by old and young. While in camp the soldiers would sing it constantly and all the Mexicans could hear was "Green grows the rushes, oh." They immediately began to call the American soldiers by the first two words, as it sounded to them, "gringos." They made it into one word, by which they will ever know the Americans—"Gringo."

SEVEN MILES OF OLD CARS.

Convicts in Wyoming Breaking Up Worn-Out Railroad Material.

Seven miles of condemnation is a long-drawn-out affair even for the west. But it stands as a western growth near the state penitentiary at Laramie, Wyo., where convicts are daily engaged in making it an ever-lessening fact. For many months the inspectors of the Union Pacific railroad have scrutinized the thousands of freight cars that handle the overland traffic. When a debilitated car of low capacity or unequipped with air brakes rattled past it was branded as condemned, and, if empty, was shunted off on the side track built to be a last refuge for the doomed cars. This process continued for months till the cars, averaging thirty feet in length, reached a total length of seven miles. This distance was ascertained by local statisticians, who, in the interests of railroad history, pedaled their bicycles along the line and measured it with their cyclometers. These cars are humpbacked, swaybacked and contorted in every conceivable way, but they still hold themselves erect with a kind of melancholy dignity. They have had careers varying from eight to twelve years, and since their building a score of changes have taken place in car construction. Their capacity is often as low as 18,000 pounds, whereas the modern car is from 40,000 to 60,000 pounds capacity. The brake mechanism for the freight car has come to be as complicated as was that of the passenger car thirty years ago, and inventions applying to doors, ventilation and running gear make the old-time cars most pronounced "back numbers." A contract between railroad and state calls for the demolition of these cars by the convicts, the wood going to the penitentiary, where it will keep the state's charges warm this winter, and the scrap iron returning to the railroad shops, whence it will issue in due time in the form of new railway material.

SCORPION BY MAIL.

Animal Had Crawled in the Pamphlet while at Jamaica.

A few days ago C. G. Lloyd, the botanist, received through the mail a pamphlet issued by the botanical department of the colonial government of the island of Jamaica. Upon removing the wrapper and straightening out the folds of the pamphlet there was disclosed the remains of a deadly scorpion. It is characteristic of this venomous insect to seek a hiding place in anything of tubular shape which will give it the opportunity of crawling to the far end of its castle and there awaiting the chance of giving some unsuspecting person a glimpse of the River Styx. In this case the scorpion, while prowling around among the mail sacks in the Kingston postoffice, discovered the pamphlet and immediately crawled into the opening. Unfortunately for "his scorpionship," or fortunately for some mail clerk, the pamphlet was placed under a pile of mail matter in the sack, with the result that the insect was flattened out. Mr. Lloyd saw in an instant the nature of the foreign corpse, and wisely put it aside until he held an inquest. Like an Indian, the only good scorpion is a dead one, and not even a hardened coroner would dare to sit on one if the thing showed evidences of playing 'possum. The weight on this scorpion was so heavy that his tail took the familiar curve it assumes when the business end is ready to go to work. The "stinger" is forced out to its full length. Mr. Lloyd says that this is only an instance of how insects are accidentally transmitted from one part of the world to another. The accompanying danger is correspondingly great to those who handle the mail matter.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Big Salaries.

New York Press: Speaking of big salaries, the biggest on record was paid to George Gould. For ten years' work his father gave him \$5,000,000. The amount went down as "for services rendered." That was at the rate of \$500,000 a year. The highest salary ever paid a railroad president was \$75,000 a year that went to Sir William C. Van Horn when he was president of the Canadian Pacific.

Booker T. Washington on Slavery.

Booker T. Washington, the distinguished colored man of the south, in a recent speech said: "American slavery was a great curse to both races, and I would be the last to apologize for it. But, in the providence of God, I believe that slavery laid the foundation for the solution of the problem that is now before us in the south. During slavery the negro was taught every trade, every industry that constitutes the foundation for a living."

An Experimental Electric Line.

An English engineer has constructed an experimental electric line on which miniature carriages travel at the rate of 240 miles an hour. The design is to convey postal matter only, and notwithstanding the high speed, it is averred that the carriages can be almost instantly stopped at any point by simply pressing a button.

POWER OF AUTHORITY.

Lack of Respect for It Causes Many Political Crimes.

The authority of the state is as sacred in its own place as the authority of the home, and that nation which above all personal and individual rights holds the law of the land and the government of the nation in the highest esteem is the nation which will insure its final prosperity. And yet there are those, and they are not in small number, in this and other lands, who rebel against the constituted authority of their government, and at the same time consider themselves good citizens. European rulers have been assassinated, two attempts have been made upon the life of England's queen, and in our country Presidents Lincoln and Garfield were foully murdered. And what was the primary cause of these terrible tragedies? Nothing more nor less than lack of respect for constituted authority. And there are those today who, while perhaps they will not resort to such deeds of violence, nevertheless have a hatred of the government of the nation, because, forsooth, the political party which they favor does not happen to be in power. With such people, no matter what the chief executive of the nation does, it is wrong. No matter how carefully political affairs, the affairs of the nation, are planned and managed, the whole government in their opinion (anything but a humble opinion, by the way) consists of a set of thieves, robbers, money-grabbers and the like, who are only at the seat of government with the one intention of seeing what they can make out of their term of office. In some cases this may be more or less true; but if it is, it certainly does not excuse any loyal and patriotic citizen of this great republic from being bound to pay his meed of homage and respect for the constituted authority of the government of his country.—Donohoe's Magazine.

WHAT THE EAGLE SIGNIFIES.

Why It Was Chosen as the Emblematic Bird of America.

From the Detroit Free Press: In ancient mythology the eagle was believed to carry the souls of the dying to their abode on Mount Olympus and was called the bird of Jove. The eagle was first taken as a symbol of royal power by the ancient Etruscans, who bore its image upon their standard. In the year 87 B. C. a silver eagle, with extended wings, poised on the top of a spear, with a thunderbolt held in its claws, was adopted as the military standard to be borne at the head of their legions by the Romans. At the time of Hadrian a golden eagle was substituted for the silver one. A two-headed eagle was adopted by the Byzantine emperors as a symbol of their control of both the east and the west. The double-headed eagle of Russia was adopted on the marriage of Ivan I. with a Grecian princess of the eastern empire; that of Austria was first used when the emperor of Germany took the title of Roman emperor. The national standard of Russia bears a black eagle, that of Poland a white one. Napoleon I. took a golden eagle for his standard, modeled of pure gold and bearing a thunderbolt, after the pattern of the eagle of the Romans. This standard was disused under the Bourbons, but was restored by a decree of Louis Napoleon in 1852. The eagle was first used on American coins in 1788, on cents and half-cents issued from the Massachusetts mint. It was adopted in the plan of a national coinage as a design upon all gold coins and on the silver dollar, half-dollar and quarter-dollar. The design of the eagle was at one time suggested for the national flag, but was abandoned.

Health from an Open Fireplace.

Physicians are discovering that the old-time open fire had much to do with the health of our grandmothers and that steam heat and furnace heat are responsible for many ailments. Steam heat especially has a way of gradually increasing so that anyone who is used to a steam-heated room becomes an easy victim to colds and all the long string of ailments to which a cold is the introduction. An open fire is a sort of inspiration in itself, and since it draws in the out-of-door oxygen through all the cracks and crannies it helps to purify the air in the room while it heats it.

Oriental Advertisers.

Some of the similies used by oriental advertisers are remarkable. Here are one or two specimens which have recently appeared in eastern newspapers: "Goods dispatched as expeditiously as a cannon ball." "Parcels done up with as much care as that bestowed on her husband by a loving wife." "Paper tough as elephant's hide." "The print of our books is clear as crystal, the matter elegant as a singing girl." "Customers treated as politely as by the rival steamship companies." "Silks and satins smooth as a lady's cheek and colored like the rainbow."

PRIESTS OF CASTILIAN BLOOD

Two Grand Old Men of Wonderful Energy and Ability.

"These high-class Spanish priests are wonderful men," said a prominent Catholic to a New Orleans Times-Democrat man. "I never encountered two finer gentlemen and more accomplished scholars than Archbishop Barnada, who was consecrated here recently, and Archbishop Zubiria, who passed through New Orleans recently. Monsignor Barnada is archbishop of Santiago de Cuba and Monsignor Zubiria is archbishop of Durango, old Mexico. Both are over 75, yet they are actively administering offices that are fully as important from a merely material standpoint and vastly more trying than the governorship of states. Their duties are complex and arduous to the last degree, yet they think nothing of long journeys by land and sea, and neither of them betrayed the least signs of fatigue. Such physical vitality was amazing and their mental activity was equally remarkable. I found them not only men of wide general culture, but they were thoroughly au fait in the affairs of the day and exhibited a keen and lively interest in current events. I found it almost impossible to realize that they had reached a period when all cares are laid aside. The two archbishops have the best Castilian blood in their veins and are certainly magnificent types of their race. I doubt whether the present generation will produce many such grand old men."



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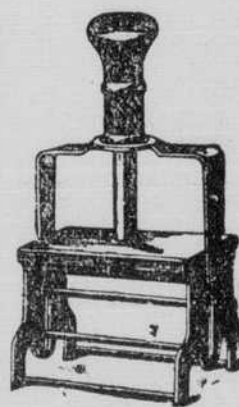
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